

which the discovery of fresh facts has invalidated a historian's verdict, but a question of the conclusions to be drawn from well-known facts and documents.¹

Macauley tries to exonerate the King at the expense of the Secretary. In this he follows the example of the Commission of Enquiry appointed by the King in 1695. Both the report of the Commission and the address of Parliament based on it, in the words of a contemporary, 'loaded to purpose' the Master of Stair, but 'the King is most justly relieved of all the aspersions raised in that affair of Glencoe.'²

William in turn exonerated Stair, and laid the blame on Glenlyon and the inferior agents employed. He declared that the manner of the execution of the men of Glencoe was contrary to the laws of hospitality and humanity, but that Viscount Stair,, being 'many hundred miles distant' could have no knowledge of nor accession to the method of that execution/ and was therefore pardoned for * any excess of zeal, as going beyond his instructions/ ³ To a limited extent this distinction is justifiable. Stair did not suggest the treachery which preceded the massacre: he merely ordered the massacre. He ordered that 'the thieving tribe in Glencoe' should be 'rooted out', and that the attack should be 'secret and sudden'. But after the massacre he wrote,
* All ! regret is that any of the sect got away ;

and this
subsequent approval of the measures taken to
carry out his
directions fixes the responsibility upon him.

William's position is clearer. His orders
were : ^s If

¹ Faget, Paradoxes and Puzzles, chap, id, Lord Macaulay
and the Mas-
sacre of Glencoe ^originally published as an article in
Blackwood's Maga-
zine for July, iS-59}.

- Ogihie to Carstares, in State Papers and Letters
Addressed to William
Carstares, p. 258. The report is printed ; ibid. pp. 236-
54.

² See John Murray Graham, Annals and
Correspondence of the Vis-
count and the First and Second Earls of Stair (1875), i.
160, 193-200.